

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 HEW-04
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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8684
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1964

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: TBIO, TPHY, IM, BG
SUBJECT: INDIAN BAN ON EXPORT OF PRIMATES

REFS: A. STATE 071016; B. 77 DACCA 1670 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. BDG HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO EXPORT OF "A LIMITED NUMBER" OF MONKEYS FOR LEGITIMATE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PURPOSES. GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO KEEP NUMBER EXPORTED TO THE 1976 LEVEL OF ABOUT 1,000. LESS THAN 100 MONKEYS WERE EXPORTED DURING 1977 BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES WITH U.S. COMPANY WHICH HANDLED EXPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. BD CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS HAMID TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 29 THAT BDG HAS NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO EXPORT OF RHESUS MONKEYS FOR "LEGITIMATE" RESEARCH PURPOSES SO LONG AS THE NUMBER EXPORTED ANNUALLY IS LOW ENOUGH TO PRESERVE THE MONKEY POPULATION. HAMID CONFIRMED THAT APPROXIMATELY 1,000 MONKEYS HAD BEEN EXPORTED IN 1976 BUT
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THAT LESS THAN 100 HAD BEEN SHIPPED IN 1977.

3. ACCORDING TO HAMID, THE ONLY LICENSED EXPORTER IS MOL ENTERPRISES OF PORTLAND, OREGON. AS REPORTED IN REF (B), MOL HAS A TEN-YEAR CONTRACT WITH THE BDG WHICH ALLOWS IT TO EXPORT 5,000 MONKEYS ANNUALLY. HAMID SAID THIS NUMBER WAS "WAY TOO HIGH" AND WOULD

QUICKLY DECIMATE THE BDG MONKEY POPULATION IF PERMITTED. HAMID ALSO EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH MOL'S HANDLING OF THE CONTRACT TO DATE, NOTING THAT CHECKS WRITTEN TO PAY FOR THE MONKEYS EXPORTED IN 1977 HAD NOT YET CLEARED. HE WAS SKEPTICAL OF MOL'S ABILITY TO CARRY OUT ITS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE CONTRACT. HOWEVER HE SAID THE BDG HAD NO INTENTION OF ABROGATING THE CONTRACT IF MOL WOULD AGREE TO A REDUCED LEVEL OF EXPORTS AND PAY A BETTER PRICE FOR THE MONKEYS. HAMID THOUGHT EXPORT OF 1,000 MONKEYS A YEAR WAS "REASONABLE."

4. HAMID NOTED THAT A SMALL BUT VOCAL GROUP HERE, COMPOSED MAINLY OF CONSERVATIONISTS, HAS CALLED FOR A TOTAL BAN ON MONKEY EXPORTS FROM BD. HE SAID THAT THIS GROUP'S PROTESTS STEM PARTLY FROM EXTENSIVE DAMAGE TO THE MONKEY POPULATION DURING AN EARLIER TIME WHEN UNLIMITED EXPORTS WERE ALLOWED AND RUMORS THAT MONKEYS HAD BEEN USED FOR OBJECTIONABLE PURPOSES SUCH AS RESEARCH ON THE NEUTRON BOMB. DESPITE THESE OBJECTIONS, THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT WISH TO IMPOSE AN EXPORT BAN OR CEILING. BUT BEFORE FURTHER MONKEY EXPORTS ARE ALLOWED, THE BDG MUST ASSURE THAT THE NUMBER OF MONKEYS EXPORTED IS LOW ENOUGH TO ASSURE THE CONTINUED SURVIVAL OF THE MONKEY POPULATION IN BANGLADESH; THAT SOUND EXPORT ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE (INCLUDING AN ACCEPTABLE PRICE); AND

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THAT THE MONKEYS WOULD BE USED FOR LEGITIMATE RESEARCH PURPOSES.

5. COMMENT: THE CHIEF CONSERVATOR WAS RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS A SPECIFIC LEVEL OF MONKEY EXPORTS AND HIS EXPLANATION OF THE BDG'S POSITION ON THIS ISSUE WAS SOMEWHAT EQUIVOCAL. HOWEVER HE WAS QUITE SPECIFIC IN HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT ARRANGEMENT WITH MOL ENTERPRISES. THERE IS THUS NO ASSURANCE THAT BD WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT OR CONSISTENT SUPPLIER OF MONKEYS IN THE FUTURE. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONTACT MOL ENTERPRISES, P.O. BOX 13455, PORTLAND, OREGON 97213 TO INQUIRE ABOUT STATUS OF ITS CONTRACT AND CURRENT PLANS FOR EXPORTING FROM BANGLADESH.
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